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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/060,541	01/30/2002	Robert Throop	85ER-00116	8885

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EXAMINER
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BLAIR, DOUGLAS B

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2142

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
3 MONTHS	02/12/2007	PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

10/060,541

Applicant(s)

THROOP, ROBERT

Examiner

Douglas B. Blair

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 28 November 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-35 and 37-46 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-35 and 37-46 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

**DETAILED ACTION**

***Response to Amendment***

1. Claims 1-35 and 37-46 are currently pending in this office action.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1-35 and 37-43 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Number 6,704,118 to Hull et al. in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication Number 2002/0059317 by Black et al. (Now U.S. Patent Number 7,103,602) in further view of U.S. Patent Application Publication Number 2001/0049611 to Peach.
4. As to claim 1, Hull teaches a method for managing email content, comprising the steps of: electronically monitoring network email for email content (col. 8, lines 27-63); automatically extracting the content (col. 8, lines 27-63); loading the content to a graphics database accessible from the network (col. 9, lines 30-55); and triggering tasks to be performed as part of a workflow process based on the content extracted from the network email (col. 8, lines 27-63, archiving is considered as task); however Hull does not explicitly teach analyzing an email for an attachment and converting the attachment into a graphics image format nor does Hull teach the a prompt to a user in a workflow system for processing insurance claims.

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Black teaches analyzing the network email to determine whether the network email includes at least one enclosure, if the network email includes at least one enclosure, determining whether the at least one enclosure is in a non-graphics image format (paragraph 46), and converting the content of the network email including the at least one enclosure having a non-graphics image format to a graphics image format (paragraph 93) and triggering tasks to be performed as part of a workflow process based on the content extracted from at least the network email and the at least one enclosure included with the network email (paragraph 93, the archiving is considered as task).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Computer networking art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of Hull regarding the archival of email content with the teachings of Black regarding the detection and conversion of email attachments because conversion of email attachments into a standard format simplifies document storage (Black, paragraphs 2-5).

Peach teaches a method for managing email content using an email server, an email induction server and a graphics database, the email server, the email induction server and the graphics database are in communication through a network, the method comprising the steps of: receiving at the email server an email via the network; electronically monitoring the network email received at the email server for email content; automatically extracting content of an email and converting it into a single page image format; loading the content of the network email into a graphics database accessible from the network; and triggering tasks to be performed as part of a workflow process based on the content extracted from the network email, wherein triggering tasks includes prompting the user to perform a workflow activity (paragraphs 21-25).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Computer Networking art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of the Hull-Black combination regarding the processing of emails with the teachings of Peach regarding an automated insurance workflow system that prompts a user because Peach provides an overview of that includes the more specific techniques taught by Hull and Black.

5. As to claim 2, Black teaches a method of claim 1, wherein the attachments have graphic image formats (paragraph 45).

6. As to claim 3, Black teaches the method of claim 1, the step of automatically extracting the content comprising extracting electronic documents from the email (paragraph 46).

7. As to claim 4, Hull teaches the method of claim 1, the step of automatically extracting the content comprising extracting parsed text from the email (col. 9, lines 30-55).

8. As to claim 5, Hull teaches loading the content into a graphics database comprising loading the content of the network email into a data retrieval and storage repository (col. 9, lines 30-55).

9. As to claim 6, Black teaches a method including automatically extracting the content of the network email including graphics image attachments, documents and parsed text from the email (paragraphs 45 and 46); and a method including associating content with business tasks and triggering task to be performed as part of a workflow process (paragraph 99).

10. As to claim 7, Hull teaches the step of electronically monitoring comprising periodically polling one or more email inboxes for new messages (col. 8, lines 27-63).

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11. As to claim 8, the Hull-Black combination teaches a method of claim 7, including the step of periodically polling however the Hull-Black combination does not teach polling the email inboxes at about every ten seconds.

Official notice is taken that polling a mailbox at an arbitrary interval, including 10 seconds, was well known at time of the applicant's invention.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Computer Networking art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of the Hull-Black combination regarding the archiving of email with a polling at a random interval because any email system must have some interval to poll for checking for new mail messages.

12. As to claim 9, Hull teaches claim 1, further comprising the step of automatically determining an organization associated with the email (col. 8, lines 27-63 and col. 9, lines 30-55).

13. As to claim 10, Hull teaches the method of claim 9, the step of automatically determining an organization comprising automatically comparing the organization with an authorization list (col. 8, lines 51-59, the configuration file).

14. As to claim 11, Hull teaches claim 10, further comprising forwarding the email to an electronic file for error handling in the event that the organization is not within the authorization list (col. 8, lines 27-63 and col. 9, lines 30-55).

15. As to claim 12, Hull teaches the step of automatically determining an organization comprising the step of interrogating a from-field of the email (col. 8, lines 27-63 and col. 9, lines 30-55).

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16. As to claim 13, Hull teaches the method of claim 1, further comprising the step of automatically scanning the email for illegal text strings defined in a predetermined electronic file (col. 8, lines 27-63 and col. 9, lines 30-55).

17. As to claim 14, Hull teaches the method of claim 13, further comprising moving the message with one or more illegal text strings to an electronic file for error handling (col. 8, lines 27-63 and col. 9, lines 30-55).

18. As to claim 15, Hull teaches the method of claim 1, the step of automatically extracting the content comprising the step of converting the email, without enclosures, to a graphics image (col. 8, lines 27-63 and col. 9, lines 30-55).

19. As to claim 16, Hull teaches the method of claim 15, the step of converting the email to a graphics image comprising converting the email to a TIFF image (col. 8, lines 27-63 and col. 9, lines 30-55).

20. As to claim 17, Black teaches the method of claim 1, including interpreting enclosures (paragraph 46).

21. As to claim 18, Black teaches the step of converting the enclosures to one or more graphic images (paragraphs 40-50 and 90-100).

22. As to claim 19, Black teaches converting multiple graphic images to a single page graphic image (paragraphs 40-50 and 90-100).

23. As to claim 20, Black teaches converting multiple graphic images to a single page graphic image comprising converting to a TIFF image (paragraphs 40-50 and 90-100).

24. As to claim 21, Black teaches converting each non-graphic image enclosures of the email to one or more graphic images (paragraphs 40-50 and 90-100).

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25. As to claim 22, Black teaches converting multiple graphic images to a single page graphic image (paragraphs 40-50 and 90-100).

26. As to claim 23, Black teaches converting each of the non-graphic image enclosure comprising converting the non-graphic image enclosure to one or more TIFF images (paragraphs 40-50 and 90-100).

27. As to claim 24, Black teaches converting to one or more TIFF images comprising converting multiple page TIFF images to a single page TIFF image (paragraphs 40-50 and 90-100).

28. As to claim 25, Black teaches the non-graphic image enclosures comprising one or more of spreadsheets, documents, rich text files, and postscript files (paragraphs 40-50 and 90-100).

29. As to claim 26, Black teaches converting .pdf files to one or more graphic images (paragraphs 40-50 and 90-100).

30. As to claim 27, Black teaches converting the one or more graphic images to a single page TIFF image (paragraphs 40-50 and 90-100).

31. As to claim 28, Black teaches converting graphic images to one or more TIFF images (paragraphs 40-50 and 90-100).

32. As to claim 29, Black teaches converting multi-page TIFF images to a single page TIFF image (paragraphs 40-50 and 90-100).

33. As to claim 30, Hull teaches the graphic images comprising one or more of .pdf and jpg files (col. 8, lines 27-63 and col. 9, lines 30-55).

34. As to claim 31, Black teaches converting each .wpd file to a .doc file (paragraphs 40-50 and 90-100).



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35. As to claim 32, Black teaches converting each .doc file to one or more graphic images (paragraphs 40-50 and 90-100).

36. As to claim 33, Black teaches converting the images to a single page TIFF image (paragraphs 40-50 and 90-100).

37. As to claim 34, Black teaches formulating an over view file summarizing the content stored in the graphics database (paragraph 97).

38. As to claims 35 and 37-43, they feature limitations found in the claims above and are therefore rejected for the same reasons as the claims above.

39. Claims 44-46 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Number 6,704,118 to Hull et al. in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication Number 2002/0059317 by Black et al. in further view of U.S. Patent Application Publication Number 2002/0007289 by Malin et al. and U.S. Patent Application Publication Number 2001/0049611 to Peach.

As to claim 44, the teachings of the Hull-Black-Peach combination make most of claim 44 obvious (see the preceding rejection of claim 1); however the Hull-Black-Peach combination does not explicitly teach the specific concept of an insurance claim. Peach discusses insurance scenarios in general.

Malin teaches a method for automatically processing an insurance claim in a networked environment (paragraphs 32-45).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Computer Networking art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of the Hull-Black-Peach combination regarding archiving emails and attachments in an insurance setting with the teachings of Malin regarding

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the automatic processing of an insurance claim in a networked environment because an automatic system is more efficient and helps retain insurance policy customer loyalty (Malin, paragraph 9).

40. As to claim 44, Hull teaches triggering workflow associated with the email in response to the acknowledgement (col. 8, lines 27-63).

41. As to claim 45, Malin teaches the workflow comprising further processing of the insurance claim (paragraphs 19 and 20).

#### ***Response to Arguments***

42. Applicant's arguments filed 11/28/2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. The Hull and Black references show that the techniques claimed by the applicant were well known at the time of the applicant invention. The Peach reference has been added to the rejection to explicitly show the applicant's argued claim amendment by showing that emails can be processed (paragraph 21), converted to single page images (paragraph 22), and the results can prompt a user to initiate a workflow (paragraph 25). The addition of the Peach reference also show explicit motivation for combining Hull and Black, by providing an overview of system using the specific techniques taught by Hull (email processing) and Black (image production).

#### ***Conclusion***

43. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

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A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

44. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Douglas B. Blair whose telephone number is (571) 272-3893. The examiner can normally be reached on 9:00am-5:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Andrew Caldwell can be reached on (571) 272-3868. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Douglas Blair

DBB



ANDREW CALDWELL  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER